

**For Immediate Release:** February 8, 2010

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**McCollum Mourns the Death of Rep. John Murtha (D-PA)**

**Washington, DC** - The following statement was issued by Congresswoman Betty McCollum upon learning of the death today of U.S. Rep. John Murtha (D-PA), chairman of the U.S. House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee. Mr. Murtha was first elected to Congress in February 1974 and represented Pennsylvania's 12<sup>th</sup> District.

"Rep. John Murtha was a passionate legislator and decorated ex-Marine (Bronze Star and two Purple Hearts) who always stood with our fighting men and women and their families as he worked to keep America strong and safe. Jack's courageous leadership in opposing the war in Iraq is in large part why our troops are being responsibly drawn down today. Beneath the rough exterior Jack was always a gentleman and quick with a warm word. I will miss him greatly."

***Congresswoman Betty McCollum (MN-4) serves on the House Appropriations and Budget Committees.***

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